

The fifth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1918 was held at its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., on Friday, November 16, 1917.

The following members were present:

Charles Moore, Chairman;

Frederick Law Olmsted;

Herbert Adams;

Charles A. Platt;

Wm. Mitchell Kendall;

J. Alden Weir;

also Colonel C. S. Ridley, U. S. Army, the Secretary and Executive Officer.

The Commission was called to order at 9:30 a. m. and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the meeting held on October 27, 1917, were approved.

2. SKETCH MODEL FOR DUPONT MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN: By Act of February 26, 1917. Congress authorized the removal of the statue of Admiral Dupont in Dupont Circle in this city, and the erection and replacement thereof by a new

memorial to be presented to the United States, Mr. Daniel Chester French is the sculptor, and Mr. Henry Bacon the architect. The Act provides that the site and design for the memorial shall be approved by the Commission of Fine Arts, and that the old Dupont statue shall be relocated outside of the District of Columbia in conformity with the law the donors submitted a small sketch model to the Commission for their approval or criticism. The Act of Congress further provides that no greater area in the Circle shall be taken for the memorial than the small Circle now occupied by the statue of Admiral Dupont. The plans for the memorial meet this condition. Both site and design were approved.

3. PROPOSED MONUMENT IN ARLINGTON CEMETERY OVER THE GRAVE OF REAR ADMIRAL

WILLIAM H. EMORY: The Quartermaster General of the Army, in charge of Arlington Cemetery, submitted to the Commission a blue print design of a proposed monument to be erected over the grave of Rear Admiral William H. Emory in Arlington Cemetery. The monument was to be rather unusual but its size was to be within the prescribed maximum dimensions. The views of the Commission were requested as to the desirability of permitting the erection of the monument after this unusual design. The Commission recommended the approval of the design, at the

same time expressing their gratification of the method in which it was presented for the approval of the Quartermaster General; namely, in preliminary sketch form on which desirable changes could be made at any time without much trouble. (See Exhibit "A")

4. ERICSSON MEMORIAL: Colonel Ridley read to the members a letter received from the Chairman of the Scandinavian Advisory Committee on the Ericsson Memorial, stating that they had gathered \$25,000.00 in addition to the \$35,000.00 appropriated by Congress, so that the ultimate cost of the memorial would be \$60,000.00 and reiterating their disappointment if a site in the area along 17th street opposite the Pan-American or on the axis of C street were not allowed them. Considerable discussion ensued, the general feeling being that after the study already given to that area it was not suited to a memorial of that description, and that the Commission would much prefer its location on the small triangle immediately to the rear of the Pan-American Union building.

5. PROPOSED MONUMENT IN ARLINGTON CEMETERY OVER THE GRAVE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL A. R. CHAFFEE, U. S. A: The Quartermaster General of the Army in charge of Arlington Cemetery submitted to the Commission for consideration a design for a proposed memorial that the widow of the late Lieutenant General Adna R. Chaffee desires to erect on her husbands' lot in Arlington Cemetery. The monument as designed showed a bas-relief panel of General Chaffee on horseback 6 feet 10 inches by 6 feet in size and executed in pink marble, the panel being set in a boulder of granite 9 feet square and 2 feet thick, and of rock-faced cut. The proposed size of the monument was considerably in excess of the prescribed limit for monuments in Arlington Cemetery, but the Quartermaster General was inclined to grant permission for its erection because of the plea of Mrs. Chaffee that the contract with her sculptor was made by her prior to the date the regulations became effective. It was understood that the monument was ready to be placed.

The Commission did not approve the design, and while they recognized the embarrassment caused by the fact that the contract for the memorial in question was made before the new regulations were promulgated, they believed it their duty to point out that the monument when erected will violate the

canons of good order, uniformity and simplicity, which should prevail in a soldiers' cemetery. (See Exhibit "B")

After a short interval for lunch, the Commission spent some time in a discussion of the public buildings situation, and at four o'clock adjourned subject to the call of the Chairman.

Approved: Charles Moore

Chairman.

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

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Memorandum of committee meetings held in New York City on November 26, and December 11, 1917, on certain questions arising in connection with the designing of the proposed new Treasury Annex building.

Informal meeting on November 26, 1917.

The committee meeting, consisting of Mr. Pope, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Weir, and the Chairman, ex officio, was held at the office of Mr. Cass Gilbert, at 244 Madison Avenue, New York City, at 11 o'clock, A. M., November 26, 1917, to consider informally whether it would be desirable to set the proposed new Treasury Annex building back from the sidewalk line of Pennsylvania Avenue or close to the sidewalk as is the case with the Riggs National Bank and the American Security and Trust Company. Mr. Cass Gilbert is the architect preparing the design for this building for the Secretary of the Treasury. The Secretary of the Treasury had authorized Mr. Gilbert to consult the Commission of Fine Arts at any time, and Mr. Gilbert expressly stated that this conference was not to be final action of the Commission at all, but simply a matter of seeking their advice for the purpose of getting an acceptable solution to develop and place before the Commission formally at some later time.

He stated that the main point on which he wished their informal advice was whether the building should come flush with the sidewalk line on the Lafayette Park side and on the Pennsylvania Avenue side. The preliminary sketches he showed were not for an individual building complete in itself on that corner, but for a building extending along the whole front of that square facing Lafayette Park from H Street to Pennsylvania Avenue, the intention being that that part which is to be constructed under existing appropriation on the empty lot

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Department expand into the Belasco Theater and Cosmos Club areas.

The discussion that ensued went into the many phases of the problem with great care, discussing both the practical and artistic aspects. The committee considered the question a matter for careful study, but viewed from the artistic standpoint, irrespective of any other considerations upon which they did not at that time want to pass judgment, and considering the architecture of the building entirely from the standpoint of the development of the square in its relation to the White House, it was considered better that the building should be set back from the street line. This appeared to be Mr. Gilbert's feeling as well.

Formal meeting on December 11, 1917.

A formal committee meeting of members of the Commission of Fine Arts was called at Mr. Cass Gilbert's office at 244 Madison Avenue, New York City, on this date to give a formal opinion on the above matter. Mr. Kendall, Mr. Platt, Mr. Adams and Mr. Weir composed the committee, and Mr. Gilbert was present.

Mr. Gilbert stated that the Secretary of the Treasury wanted a definite formal letter, which he could show to the President if necessary, giving the Commission of Fine Arts' opinion as to whether or not the Treasury Annex building should be set back. He informed the members that the Secretary's preference was not to have the building set back at all but come flush with the sidewalk line, but that he would permit a maximum set-back of ten feet.

Mr. Gilbert reviewed the whole situation again, and it was gone over very carefully in a very full and comprehensive discussion. The conclusion was that the Commission should approve the placing of the building back ten feet as suggested. A number of reasons for this were advanced, but primarily because the

difference in height between the Treasury building and the Annex will be less marked if the latter building is set back, and a more harmonious relationship established between these two buildings themselves and between the buildings of the White House and Lafayette Square. The following letter, which received the formal approval of the Chairman before being transmitted to the Secretary of the Treasury, was then prepared:

Washington, D. C.
December 12, 1917.

Mr. Secretary:

Your request for a formal opinion from the Commission of Fine Arts as to the advisability, from an artistic point of view, of setting the proposed Treasury Annex building back from the street line on Pennsylvania Avenue was laid before the Commission yesterday by the architect for the building.

After careful consideration, and taking into account the character of the site and its environment, the Commission advise placing the building back ten feet from the property line.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,
(Signed) C. S. Ridley,
Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

The Honorable,
The Secretary of the Treasury."

Approved: Charles Moore

Chairman.

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

